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WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Preparatory Committee
Third session
Geneva, 14-18 September 1992
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE AND DOCUMENTATION, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE FINAL OUTCOME

Letter dated 11 August 1992 from the Director of International Protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees addressed to the Secretary-General of the World Conference on Human Rights

I have the honour to refer to our recent conversation during the course of which we discussed the question of statelessness.

The Executive Committee of the High Commissioner's Programme has expressed its concern over problems of statelessness several times in recent years. In its conclusion No. 50 (XXXIX) (1988), paragraph (1), the Executive Committee noted the close connection between the problems of refugees and of stateless persons and invited States actively to explore and promote measures favourable to stateless persons, including accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as well as the adoption of legislation to protect the basic rights of stateless persons and to eliminate sources of statelessness. At its most recent session, in 1991, the Executive Committee reaffirmed Conclusion No. 50 (1)(XXXIX) and reiterated its call to States actively to explore and promote measures favourable to stateless persons, including accession to the international instruments pertaining to stateless persons, and in this connection believed it would be useful for United Nations human rights bodies to address statelessness issues, including the problem of arbitrary deprivation of nationality and the content of the right to a nationality.

Reflecting this concern on the part of the Executive Committee, the Office has raised the subject of statelessness as an important human rights issue which merits a place on the agenda of the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights. In recommendations to and a statement before the Preparatory Committee for the World Conference on Human Rights at its first session and in the High Commissioner's statement to the Commission on Human Rights at its forty-eighth session, the Office specifically noted that the right to a nationality deserves more attention from the international community. In this regard the Office pointed out that the inability of a refugee to avail him- or herself of the protection of a nationality can be seen as an issue of statelessness, whether de facto or de jure. States have the responsibility to reduce statelessness and to provide for the possibility of enjoying the normal rights of nationality.

(Signed) Leonardo FRANCO

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REGIONAL MEETINGS

Recommendations concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations in the regional meetings for the World Conference on Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General

RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Amnesty International
ATD-Quart Monde
Baha'i International Community
France Libertés: Fondation Danielle Mitterrand
Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)
International Catholic Child Bureau
International Council of Voluntary Agencies
International Commission of Jurists
International Federation of ACAT (Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture)
International Federation of Human Rights
International Human Rights Law Group
International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples
International Peace Bureau

GE.92-14041/0900K (E)

International Pen Writers in Prison Committee
International Service for Human Rights
International Union of Lawyers
Minority Rights Group
Service, Peace and Justice in Latin America
Soroptimist International
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches
World Jewish Congress
World Young Women's Christian Association

Association for the Prevention of Torture
International Association of Rights and Humanity
SIKH Human Rights Group (Canada)

JOINT NGO STATEMENT ON NGO PARTICIPATION IN THE REGIONAL MEETINGS PREPARING FOR THE WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS

1. NGOs have made significant contributions of information and analysis to the United Nations human rights bodies, and have played a constructive role in advising on the formation of the United Nations human rights programme. Furthermore, because of the interdependence, indivisibility and universality of human rights, there needs to be a full contribution from NGOs in order to review fully the efforts of the United Nations to promote and protect human rights. As stated in the joint NGO submission to the Preparatory Committee at its first session, it is important both for the success and integrity of the World Conference that all NGOs with a clear interest and expertise in human rights be provided the widest possible access and participation to the Preparatory Committees, related international, national and regional activities and meetings, and to the Conference itself.

2. The NGOs signing the present statement therefore believe that the regional meetings, as part of the preparatory process of the World Conference, should involve a broad participation by NGOs, including indigenous peoples.

3. We propose to the third Preparatory Committee that the criteria for NGO participation in the regional meetings should be: (a) NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC); (b) NGOs in consultative status with relevant specialized international agencies and United Nations organs and bodies; (c) NGOs with observer status or having other forms of cooperation with regional intergovernmental human rights bodies; (d) NGOs which have made submissions to United Nations human rights procedures but which are not in consultative status with ECOSOC; (e) national NGOs that have a publicly recognized track record of active involvement in human rights issues; (f) indigenous peoples, including those participating in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

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REGIONAL MEETINGS

Recommendations concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations in the regional meetings for the World Conference on Human Rights

Report of the Secretary-General

RECOMMENDATIONS SUBMITTED BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

All-India Women's Conference
Amnesty International
Associated Country Women of the World
ATD-Quart Monde
Baha'i International Community
France Libertés: Fondation Danielle Mitterrand
Friends World Committee for Consultation (Quakers)
International Alliance of Women
International Catholic Child Bureau
International Council of Jewish Women
International Council of Voluntary Agencies
International Commission of Jurists
International Federation of ACAT (Action of Christians for the Abolition of Torture)

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International Federation of Human Rights
International Human Rights Law Group
International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples
International Peace Bureau
International Pen Writers in Prison Committee
International Service for Human Rights
International Union of Lawyers
Minority Rights Group
Service, Peace and Justice in Latin America
Soroptimist International
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World Jewish Congress
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